

PacifiCorp Opens 100 MW Wind Project; PPM Developed OR Site

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In a build-to-sell model that PPM Energy hopes to duplicate with other power providers it is talking with, PacifiCorp announced Monday it has begun commercial operation of the 100.5 MW Juniper 1 wind power project in eastern Oregon along the Columbia River. PacifiCorp assumed ownership of the facility in the final stages of construction, but no details on the terms of the sale were made public.

Located southwest of Arlington, OR, PacifiCorp purchased Juniper 1 in July. PPM started constructing the facility in January as part of an agreement under which it will operate and maintain the 67-turbine complex, which is spread over 5,000 acres, using 1.5-MW SLE turbines on towers 263 feet in height at the hub.

"We do what customers need," said a PPM spokesperson in Portland. "We call it 'build-to-sell' and we're talking about it with a number of other customers."

Utility and political leaders in Oregon emphasized the in-state nature of the deal with two Portland-based companies -- albeit PPM being a subsidiary of ScottishPower -- combining to develop another renewable energy project in the state. "The electricity generated at Leaning Juniper 1 is part of the diverse resource mix used to supply electricity to PacifiCorp's approximately 1.7 million customers in six western states," said a spokesperson for the MidAmerican Energy Holdings Co. utility.

The president of the PacifiCorp's Pacific Power unit, Pat Reiten said the wind project demonstrated a continued commitment to pursue renewable resources, and "it is a clear indication of our intent to diversify our generation portfolio with cost-effective, environmentally prudent resources. Our customers can be proud that an increasing portion of the electricity in our portfolio is coming from wind."

In a prepared statement used by the utility, Oregon Gov. Ted Kulongoski praised the project for "expanding our state's supply of home-grown, clean sources of energy." He said the facility will increase new jobs and more environmentally clean communities. "I appreciate both PacifiCorp and PPM Energy's work in support of my vision for energy independence for Oregon."

Since becoming part of MidAmerican, PacifiCorp said it has lived up to its commitment in the renewable energy sector and is now within 64 MW of reaching a 400 MW goal. "PacifiCorp committed to bring 100 MW of cost-effective wind resources in service within one year of the transaction close and, to the extent available, to have 400 MW of cost-effective new renewable resources in its generation portfolio by the end of 2007," a utility spokesperson said.

With Leaning Juniper 1 and a recent purchase of 140.5 MW from the Marengo wind project near Dayton, WA, and some other recent purchases, PacifiCorp announced that it has "easily met" its initial 100 MW commitment. Longer term, PacifiCorp has committed to acquiring 1,400 MW of cost-effective new renewable resources by 2015.